

CONTINUING DATA

This application is a continuation of U.S. Application 10/052,632 filed 1/23/2002, now U.S. Patent # 6,715,259; which is a Divisional of U.S. Application 09/642,666 filed 8/22/2000, now U.S. Patent **System, Method and Apparatus for Filling Containers** # 6,357,490.

Inventors: Lloyd P. Johnston
Kevin Stapleton
Ernest Penachio
Mark Wolff

Background of the Invention

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to a system, method and apparatus for filling a container. More specifically, the present invention relates to a system, method and apparatus for vacuum-assisted filling of medicinal capsules with a precise dosage of dry powder pharmaceutical.

Related Art

In medicine, it is often desirable to administer various forms of medication to patients. A well known method of introducing medication into the human body is the oral ingestion of capsules. In another method, a patient may inhale certain medications through the nose or mouth. Inhalable medications come in numerous forms, including solids that are typically in the form of fine, dry powders. Specialized devices, such as inhalers, are typically provided to assist the patient in directing these fine powder medications through an airway and eventually into the lower respiratory tract. Various means for loading an inhaler with a proper dose of medication prior to use are known, including the use of capsules. For example, U.S. Patent No. 5,787,881 discloses an inhaler that is used with encapsulated dry powder medicaments. Such devices